

Sept 22: Town Session with Richard Pedrini: Apology & Acknowledgment
A note from session organizers: Reflection, Healing & Growth



As the Town of Arlington advances its efforts to address racial injustice and develop strategies for coming together as a community, an extremely vital conversation needed to be held at the forefront. We held a session for the Town with police officer Lt. Richard Pedrini to address his October 2018 remarks that have caused pain and polarization to our citizens.

We understand wholeheartedly, the challenges and frustrations of having to hold such a delicate conversation during the pandemic, within the existing limited means and with barriers to full engagement. Significant efforts were made to gather community input, and we acknowledge the need for enhanced outreach mechanisms. Nonetheless we feel that last night's session provided a space of learning and growth, for both the Town and Arlington community.

We appreciate this difficult conversation with Lt. Pedrini, and the Town for facilitating these conversations. Few communities and few police officers would put themselves out there to publicly wrestle with this issue. These discussions, as the whole process, are hard and messy, but now more than ever are required to move forward.

We encourage you to watch this session and reflect on what you heard. We've included a timeline below so you can easily navigate the session, but encourage you to view it in its entirety. Please take the time you need to process and if you want to comment to Lt. Pedrini or send us a comment, [please do so here.](#)

One message we want to make clear is that the issues that have come to light as a result of Pedrini's words, existed long before and will continue to exist, if we do not put in the work to dismantle systemic racism. The Town will continue to push forward its racial equity initiatives. [Read an overview of their efforts.](#) But it is not only on Town leadership to foster change. It's going to take an immense amount of effort from all of us to personally and professionally grow, to bring our community together, and to heal.

We want to thank the Town of Arlington, conversation moderator [Michael Curry, Esq.](#) Lt. Pedrini, the community members who made up the reaction panel, and the many concerned residents who have sent us comments before and during last night's session, and the many conversations with community members leading up to last night. There is a wide array of diverse views and feelings on the issue and they are all valid.

This session is one of many activities that have taken place and we are going to take some time to reflect and develop upcoming activities. There are many who are committed to this work to make Arlington a safe and inclusive space for all and we look forward to continuing to work with you.

Sincerely,

Jillian Harvey, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator, Town of Arlington
Allentza Michel, Town Consultant, Powerful Pathways

September 23, 2020